

To: Gray, David[gray.david@epa.gov]; Card, Joan[Card.Joan@epa.gov]; McClain-Vanderpool, Lisa[Mcclain-Vanderpool.Lisa@epa.gov]
From: Smith, Paula
Sent: Fri 8/7/2015 6:09:28 PM
Subject: Fwd: EPA statement

Fyi

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Higuchi, Dean" <Higuchi.Dean@epa.gov>
Date: August 7, 2015 at 12:04:57 PM MDT
To: "Zito, Kelly" <ZITO.KELLY@EPA.GOV>, "Smith, Paula" <Smith.Paula@epa.gov>, "Mylott, Richard" <Mylott.Richard@epa.gov>
Cc: "Keener, Bill" <Keener.Bill@epa.gov>
Subject: RE: EPA statement

Jim Dumont of Sen. Martin Heinrich's office (NM) called (575-218-5372) to inform us that the State of NM and NM Environmental Secretary are being very critical of EPA at this point, basically saying it is "EPA's fault" he wanted to provide us some intel on what he is hearing on the ground. Jim will be sending some notes on what he's observing at the various meetings he has been attending. I've told him to send us what he can and we will share with other Regions.

Thanks!

Dean Higuchi

Press Officer/Congressional Liaison/Public Affairs

US EPA, Region 9, Hawaii Office

higuchi.dean@epa.gov

808-541-2711

From: Zito, Kelly
Sent: Friday, August 07, 2015 7:34 AM

To: Smith, Paula; Mylott, Richard
Cc: Keener, Bill; Higuchi, Dean
Subject: EPA statement

Hi Paula and Rich - I've seen the statement you are using in the gold mine situation... Can you keep us in the loop if it changes, and let us know if you need our team to provide any additional info? At this point we are presuming we will send queries to you; of course we may get specific questions about any R9 impacts. We can make sure we coordinate with you on those as well. Please call to discuss further if needed...

Thanks-

Kelly

August 6 EPA Statement on Gold King Mine Release

Yesterday, an EPA team working to investigate and address contamination at the Gold King Mine in San Juan County, Colo. unexpectedly triggered a large release of mine waste water into the upper portions of Cement Creek. Initial estimates are that the release contained approximately 1M gallons of water that was held behind unconsolidated debris near an abandoned mine portal. There were several workers at the site at the time of the breach, all were unharmed.

Following the release, the Colorado Department of Public Health and the Environment notified water users downstream so they could take appropriate steps to turn off intakes until the contaminated water passes.

The primary environmental concern is the pulse of contaminated water containing sediment and metals flowing as an orange-colored discharge downstream through Cement Creek and into the Animas River. The water associated with the release is obvious and highly discolored. As a precaution, EPA recommends that recreational users of the Animas River avoid contact with or use of the river until the pulse of mine water passes. Over the next

several days, EPA teams will be sampling and investigating downstream locations to confirm that the release has passed and poses no additional concerns for aquatic life or water users. EPA will also be assessing damage near the mine portal and any residual releases of water at the mine site.

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